

Michael McLoughlin

Equality Practice under the EHRDOP: An Assessment of Selected Groups in Three Measures

Supported by

Equality Studies Unit, Measure 33A of the EHRDOP



THE EQUALITY AUTHORITY
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1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

The advent of the Celtic Tiger economy wrought very significant changes in the labour market in Ireland. The main changes occurring – growing employment and falling unemployment – can only be considered to be positive. Despite recent moderations in economic growth, Ireland's labour market is, in the main, a buoyant one and Ireland's unemployment rate remains one of the lowest in the EU. However, it is widely recognised that certain groups have not benefited from these positive developments. These groups remain vulnerable to unemployment and to discrimination in the labour market.

The need for greater equality in the labour market is clearly signalled in Ireland's National Development Plan's (NDP) Employment and Human Resources Development Operation Programme (EHRDOP). There is a focus on gender equality and social exclusion throughout the NDP's Operational Programmes and this has been widened to address the needs of specific groups experiencing disadvantage and discrimination in the labour market. These have been identified as older persons, people with disabilities, minority ethnic groups (in particular refugees) and members of the Traveller community.

The Equality Authority was established to promote equality and to combat discrimination on the basis of the nine grounds identified under the Employment Equality Act, 1998 and the Equal Status Act, 2000 and under this legislation, discrimination is prohibited in employment and vocational training. The Equality Authority's concern with equality in the labour market is reflected in the objectives of the Equality Studies Unit (ESU), a Technical Assistance measure of the EHRDOP, implemented by the Equality Authority, which identifies and advises on data deficits in respect of equality in the labour market, improves the understanding of the labour market needs of certain groups, researches the labour market experiences of the groups and enhances the monitoring outcomes for them. This study represents one action in this area of the ESU's remit.

1.2 Aims and Methodology

The objective of this study is to carry out an initial assessment of how, and to what extent, three selected measures under the EHRDOP address equality issues with respect to the specific target groups identified in the EHRDOP as being particularly vulnerable to labour market discrimination and exclusion. The measures concerned are:

1. Action Programme for the Unemployed
2. Early School Leaver Progression
3. Sectoral Entry Training: Tourism

These measures were identified and accepted by the Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion Co-ordinating Committee as relevant measures in which to progress work in the areas of equality data, indicators, participation and outcomes.

The aims of the study are:

- To highlight labour market issues for the target groups
- To explore evidence of equality practices from the perspective of providers for each measure

- To assess the capacity of each measure to secure participation from and realise outcomes for each of the groups

A review of the relevant literature which has focused on the experience of the target groups in training and education was undertaken. This was used to provide a background context of the labour market issues facing the target group.

Interviews were held with representatives from both national organisations that work with and for the four target groups and those who are involved with education and training provision. These included the following: FÁS, CERT (now Fáilte Ireland), Department of Education and Science, Vocational Education Committees, National Disability Authority, Pavee Point, Irish Refugee Council, National Council for Ageing and Older People, Age Action Ireland, Irish Senior Citizens' Parliament and the Disability Federation. Topics discussed included national policy governing the measures, measure implementation at local level, the needs of the target groups and how equality is being addressed.

Site visits were then carried out at a number of training centres to look at how the three measures were operating at a local level. Given the time constraints it was possible to visit only a limited number of centres which were identified as representative of an average training centre and included four Employment Services Offices, five Community Training Workshops and four CERT Training Centres. Although a balance was sought, urban centres predominated, with inner city and industrial estate locations being most common. Premises varied from community type facilities to industrial units to state offices. Interviews were held with centre personnel including managers and training deliverers. A total of 14 managers and 19 staff members participated in the research to discuss issues relating to equality practice, participation rates and outcomes within each measure.

1.3 Structure of the Report

Chapter 2 outlines the labour market situation of the four target groups and the issues facing them interspersed with findings from interviews with representative organisations and groups. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 describe each of the three measures in turn and present findings in relation to evidence of equality practice, levels of participation and outcomes under the following headings: access and supports, outreach work, training for staff and mainstreaming. Chapter 6 presents a summary of the findings and recommendations for building measure capacity to secure participation and address the needs of the target groups.

2. The Labour Market Needs of the Target Groups

2.1 Introduction

This section briefly sets out the labour market experiences and needs of the target groups. More specifically, and reflecting the three labour market measures with which this study is concerned, the emphasis here is on their experience of unemployment and unemployment services, education and early school leaving, and training.

2.2 Members of the Traveller Community

Education and Training

A major report by the Task Force on the Travelling Community (1995) identified areas of concern in relation to access to training and education opportunities for Travellers.

The report highlighted that early school leaving is particularly high among Travellers with many leaving at the end of the primary school cycle and only a minority remain until the end of the Junior Certificate cycle. The study stressed neither Junior nor Senior Traveller Training Centres should be an alternative to inclusion in mainstream education. Literacy was, and is, recognised as a major issue among the Traveller community. Barriers to adult education included lack of resources, entry requirements that Travellers could not meet and lack of childcare and transport.

A study undertaken by Pavee Point (2001) highlighted that education and training needs to value and recognise the identity and skills of Travellers and that bridging courses may be needed for those with negative experiences of education or for those who lack confidence. The research points out that special incentives, such as retention of the medical card and welfare payments, may be needed due to poverty and poor health and that there was a need for special Traveller childcare supports. Without such additional supports access to education, training and mainstream employment remains very difficult. Existing training opportunities were viewed as valuable but needed to be linked to progress routes into employment or further education.

This report listed a total of 167 recommendations underpinned by the recognition that a number of principles should be observed in Traveller education in order to ensure greater participation and combat discrimination. These included equality of opportunity, anti-discrimination, acknowledgment of and respect for cultural diversity and multi-ethnicity, the need for affirmative action, parental involvement and the principle of integration.

Access to the Labour Market

Given the education and training experience of the majority of the Traveller community, access to employment has been limited to lower skilled and manual work. However, there has been a contraction in such employment and an over-supply of labour resulting in a mismatch between the skills of Travellers and available employment.

The research by Pavee Point (2001) revealed that Travellers are interested in mainstream jobs and all who participated in the study reported encouraging their children to stay on in education to help them with employment opportunities in the future. Many of the women had undertaken some training and had experience of mainstream employment. However, they felt that they wanted to access better jobs. For older Travellers, opportunities for work in traditional Traveller economy enterprises are limited and many have literacy problems and difficulties dealing with modern administration. Consequently, supports for self-employment may be appropriate for this particular group.

Local studies reinforce this interest in mainstream employment and in a survey of Travellers carried out for the Southside Partnership in Dublin (Nexus, 2000) women expressed an interest in hairdressing, cooking, childcare, shop assistant, sewing and office work and men expressed an interest in areas such as bricklaying, carpentry, paving, steelwork, tree topping, and tarmacking. A further survey of Travellers in Limerick also showed a high degree of interest in mainstream employment for jobs in An Gardaí, teaching, social work, nursing and gardening among others (Doyle and O'Donoghue, 2000). The gendered nature of work choices is evident and, in pursuing an equality agenda, training and education providers need to consider this.

Discrimination

Discrimination remains a major barrier to employment for Travellers and the research undertaken by Pavee Point (2001) highlighted some of the issues to be addressed in developing appropriate services for Travellers and combating discrimination. For this study, interviews with policy makers and employer representatives revealed there was universal agreement that Travellers face significant difficulties in accessing mainstream jobs. This arose due to a combination of factors including lack of education and skills, lack of confidence and discrimination by employers and workers.

The research showed that practitioners and policymakers did not know of any specific supports for Travellers in their area and that Travellers' usage of their services was low or occasional. They noted a lack of confidence among Travellers in so far as they generally looked only for low paid work or access to Community Employment schemes and few had long-term expectations. Perhaps most importantly, a number of practitioners expressed the view that the National Employment Action Plan did not adequately target Travellers as it did not overcome the obstacle of employers refusing to employ Travellers.

It was suggested that greater attention to the particular difficulties faced by Travellers was necessary at policy level and that clearer and more targeted information on services and legal rights should be provided. There is also a need for employers, and employment support services in general, to examine attitudes to Travellers, for genuine outreach work with the community, assistance with literacy skills and support for Traveller groups.

It should be noted that practitioners, policy makers and employer representatives in this research all noted the lack of data available in relation to Traveller participation in labour market services and mainstream employment, as well as data on the implementation of anti-discriminatory policies within organisations.

Labour market issues arising for Travellers can be summarised as follows:

- Travellers have a keen interest in mainstream employment. However, due to their low level of participation in education and training, they are often confined to low skilled, low paid jobs. Specific measures to combat early school leaving among Travellers and to increase their access to and participation in targeted and mainstream employment services, adult education and training are necessary. Such provision needs to include literacy and numeracy interventions.
- Any provision or measures must recognise that labour market disadvantage is just one aspect of Travellers wider exclusion and poverty. As with many vulnerable groups, childcare provision, the retention of medical cards and financial incentives are issues for Travellers.
- In accessing employment, Travellers face a high degree of discrimination from both employers and workers. Equal status policies and accompanying anti-racist statements are needed in the work place and in organisations providing employment related services. Equality needs to be an integral part of organisations in terms of their monitoring and performance management. There needs to be a whole centre approach.

2.3 People with Disabilities

Disability groups who were interviewed for this study referred to the lack of research and data on people with disabilities which included labour market needs and experiences. This limits the capacity of various programmes, provisions and policies to meet their needs and is particularly pertinent when information that is available has highlighted that households headed by a person with a disability or illness have a very high risk of poverty (Layte et al, 2001).

The Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities produced a report (1996) that was one of the main landmarks in policy terms in this area. This shifted the focus on disability from one of 'cure' to one that emphasises the responsibility of society to provide access and equality for people with disabilities. In adopting and promoting this approach the report set down three fundamental assumptions: that disability is a social rather than a medical issue, that a civil rights perspective is needed and that equality is a key principle in the human rights approach.

The report went on to make recommendations on many areas including training and employment. The main recommendations in these areas can be summarised as follows:

- Discrimination in work on the grounds of disability should be outlawed
- Expenditure on creating sustainable employment for people with disabilities should be increased
- The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment should have overall responsibility for training and employment for people with disabilities
- All public employment services should be fully accessible to people with disabilities
- Innovative and more flexible models of training should be encouraged
- The Department of Education and Science should be responsible for all aspects of education for people with disabilities
- Alternative supports should be available if transport to mainstream or targeted provision is not feasible
- There is a need to narrow the gap between special and mainstream schools

The concept of mainstreaming has since become ingrained in disability policy with the dissolution of the National Rehabilitation Board in 2000. Responsibility for employment and training services for people with disabilities was transferred to the national training and employment body, FÁS, and information, advocacy and support functions became the remit of the support agency, Comhairle, with health issues being passed to the health boards.

The principles that guided the mainstreaming process included:

- There should be no diminution of service to people with disabilities
- New organisational arrangements would take account of people with disabilities
- Individual needs and abilities would be taken into account
- Services were to be mainstreamed to the greatest extent possible
- Current expertise in disability training would be retained

- The disability groups interviewed revealed that they believe that mainstreaming has left a lot to be desired. There is a lack of information on the process at local level and many of the organisations expressed the view that the mainstreaming process was focused at high level (policy makers and national organisations) with little being done to translate the changes at local or individual level. This has implications for people's awareness of labour market measures and supports and how to access these.

Some of the main labour market issues facing people with disabilities arising from this research are summarised below:

- There is a dearth of data on the labour market needs and experiences of people with disabilities
- People with disabilities share common issues with other vulnerable groups including the need for clear information on what is available to them, the need for flexible provision and recognition that labour market exclusion is just one aspect of their experience of disadvantage and discrimination
- There is a need for a shift from a health based approach to one based on rights and equality and physical accessibility to services
- Although mainstreaming has occurred in this area, many local groups and individuals are ill informed as to the process and agencies they must now engage with

2.4 Older People

Older people constitute one of the groups most at risk of social exclusion and poverty in Ireland and given that increases in welfare pensions were substantially lower than increases in wages in recent years, the relative incomes of older people have significantly decreased (National Council for Ageing and Older People, 2001a).

Demographic Trends

Demographic trends indicate that there will be a decrease of the number of people of working age in the future and it is predicted that by 2012 the number of people aged 55 to 64 years the labour force will be approximately 557,000, almost double the 1996 number of 300,000. The rate of growth among those aged 65 years and over is expected to be similar (Costello, 2001). Therefore, the participation of older workers will become not only desirable but also necessary to social and economic development, stability and cohesion. Nonetheless, there have been no dedicated measures to encourage the participation of older people in the labour market in Ireland, or to promote them among employers as a source of labour.

Overall labour force participation among people aged 55 to 69 years is similar to other EU countries. Men in this age group show higher levels of participation to those of their EU counterparts primarily due to the relatively large numbers involved in agriculture. The economically inactive population is one segment of the older age groups that has particular potential as a source of labour, particularly those who are retired and women on home duties. In 2000/2001 130,000 people in the 55-64 category were economically inactive, the majority of which (85,000) were married women (Murphy, 2001).

Research into retirement in Ireland (Fahey and Russell, 2001) shows a greater tendency towards early rather than late retirement. While 18% of those currently retired left the workforce at 65 years of age, 14% had retired by the time they were 54, a further 26% retired between the ages of 55 and 59, and 31% between 60 and 64. Only 6.4% of people retire after they reached 65. One third of people who were at work wanted to retire as soon as they could and a similar proportion (29%) of those who were retired wanted to take up some form of work. Early retirement is often unplanned with the main

reasons such retirement cited as illness/disability, being able to afford to retire early or being offered a good retirement package, and finding work too demanding or stressful. There was a strong preference for gradual retirement that would allow people to slow down rather than experience retirement as a sudden and total removal from working life

Education and Training

Many older people did not access education first time around and the International Adult Literacy Survey carried out by the OECD (Morgan et al, 1997) shows that in Ireland just one third of the 55-64 age group completed secondary education and that literacy among this age group remains an issue. Groups consulted for this current study felt adult education was not targeted at older people. The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment's Taskforce on Life Long Learning recognises the lower educational qualifications and literacy difficulties of many older people and puts an emphasis on change and constant developing of new and different skills (2002). Government policy has placed major emphasis on adult literacy, but over 55s do not participate in these initiatives.

However, many older people are much keener to engage in education and training for personal development and social reasons, rather than as a route to greater labour force participation. With regard to undertaking FÁS training, some felt that there would be great pressure in doing a FÁS course, that they would stand out and be the first or only older person in the class. This feeling is compounded by the belief that there is a limited social acceptance of working into later years that is reinforced by pension schemes and the public sector approach to older people.

Recommendations made by the National Council for Ageing and Older People in respect of lifelong learning reflect those made in relation to employment and training. These include:

- The promotion of the benefits of lifelong learning
- The provision of more and clearer information on provision
- The need for flexibility in provision
- Increased targeting at vulnerable groups, increased resources to cover fees
- Consideration of transport costs
- The provision of guidance and counselling in addition to training and education
- The introduction of accreditation and training to ensure the skills learned remain relevant and up-to-date

Access to the Labour Market

This study also identified a number of barriers to labour market activity and concludes that many of these are based on negative attitudes to older people that could be seen across the EU and OECD countries. These barriers include low rates of pay, lack of flexibility in working hours and opportunities to downshift, the effect work may have on pension payments, inadequate skills and education, lack of appropriate training and employment programmes and age discrimination.

Consultation by the National Council for Ageing and Older People with older people and service providers (2001b) validated these barriers and added others to them including lack of information and awareness of the potential contribution of older people, resource constraints among older people (for example, lack of transport), exclusion from training schemes by virtue of age and education requirements, lack of recognition of prior experience as opposed to formal qualifications, the perceived difficulty of the training on offer and discriminatory work place cultures and behaviours.

In order to overcome these barriers research has recommended tailored programmes for older people to prevent the drift into long-term unemployment and early retirement, enforcement of the minimum wage and access to the Back-to-Work Allowance, the introduction of specific measures to combat negative attitudes to and discrimination against older people among employers (in which the public sector should take a lead role), greater access to adult education and literacy programmes and a close examination of the effect of work on total income among older workers (Murphy, 2001). Additional solutions suggested by older people and service providers include the provision of more workplace and on-the-job training, a personal credit/discount scheme to reduce the cost of training for regular attendees and the provision of relevant supports for older workers with specific needs (National Council for Ageing and Older People, 2001b)

In summary, the following are some of the main labour market issues for older people:

- There is a clear need among this group for appropriately tailored training provision that is flexible and allows for part-time participation. This need for flexibility and reduced hours also applies to employment.
- The lower educational profile of many older people prevents them from accessing much of the existing training provision. A system of admission that recognises and values prior learning and experience is necessary to address this.
- Among the barriers to active labour force participation is the negative perceptions of older people as workers by the State, employers and younger workers that result in discrimination. Dedicated measures, including information and awareness campaigns, are needed to overcome this.
- There is a need for greater information on the opportunities available to older people.

2.5 Minority Ethnic Groups

The issue of significant numbers of minority ethnic groups is one that Ireland has only recently experienced and research into the experiences of many of these minorities is as yet relatively scarce. However, existing studies have revealed that members of minority ethnic groups experience particularly high levels of social exclusion, poverty and discrimination and that this experience extends to employment, where the right to work has been awarded by the State.

Previous research commissioned by the Refugee Agency (Fanning, Loyal and Staunton, 2000) has shown very high rates of unemployment for programme refugees, including Chilean, Vietnamese and Bosnian refugees, who have benefited from specific, if limited, education and employment support measures. Bearing this in mind, it can be assumed that unemployment among asylum seekers granted leave to remain in Ireland and the right to work, but who are not entitled to many of the training and employment supports provided to programme refugees, is also high. Asylum seekers experience a high degree of discrimination in the labour market as well as a range of other difficulties, such as language barriers and the lack of recognition of overseas qualifications. Consequently, many of those who secure employment end up working in jobs for which they are very over-qualified.

Groups consulted for this study expressed the view that there is no proactive approach to training and education for minority ethnic groups in Ireland. Discrimination was clearly felt and it was stated that work is still open only to white and Irish people. Some of the other main issues raised by the groups were as follows:

- There is strong demand for training and education among minority ethnic groups
- The programmatic and inflexible nature of training and education provision and agencies is seen as a barrier to participation

- Those seeking work felt they were expected to have lower expectations due to their ethnic status and that they were directed towards menial jobs
- Language training and skills assessment for those with the right to work were viewed positively
- FÁS provision was not always appropriate for those with higher qualifications
- Lack of acknowledgment and recognition of previous experience and qualifications is a major issue of concern
- The approach to language teaching – Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) – was not felt to be appropriate
- Trends towards early school leaving among children is in evidence amongst minority ethnic groups and particularly asylum seekers
- Accommodation issues impact on participation in employment, training and education situation

Language difficulties are the main issue for people who are eligible to undertake training. The English for Speakers of Other Languages approach was considered preferable to TEFL, in addition to English for African-English speakers. Training is not only considered necessary for the members of the minority ethnic groups, but for their tutors and teachers also, and curriculums need modernisation to reflect greater ethnic diversity.

Participants in this study noted that FÁS does not provide literacy training and stated that the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS), which is viewed as one of the main options open to people, did not properly assess people in terms of literacy and language. People often drop out with no follow up on the part of tutors or organisers. There is little evidence of an equality policy in the VTOS centres or leadership on anti-racism. However, the Asylum Seekers Unit within FÁS is seen to be strong on anti-racist work and on recruiting from minority ethnic groups.

Unaccompanied minors receive Supplementary Welfare Allowance and this largely determines their education options. Many of these are in schools and want to apply to third level education institutes through the normal procedures. However, as non-nationals they are liable for fees and therefore third level education is not seen as a realistic option. The system of, and interaction between education and welfare programmes, allowances and grants is confusing to many and their position in respect of Youthreach is also unclear. Much of the subject matter in the Irish educational system is alien to minority ethnic groups, laden with cultural values and international issues are rarely talked about in school religion or civics class. In addition, there is no funding for extra curricular activities that are vital in the development of positive social relations. Certain inner city schools have significant numbers of minority ethnic children and questions around segregation and integration arise.

Educationalists have observed that the approach to date has been segregationist with no vision of transforming the education system to accommodate minority ethnic groups. There is a perceived need to translate equality policy into practice on the ground with a concentrated effort to train all staff in equality, anti-racism and so on. There is a lack of linguistic skills amongst staff and improvements, such as the use of signage instead of words and the production of materials in other languages, are needed.

The main issues arising for minority ethnic groups can be summarised as follows:

- There is a strong interest in education and training amongst this group. However, literacy and language are the main barriers to accessing programmes. These are the areas in which most immediate intervention is needed if minority ethnic groups are to become active labour force participants.

- Many members of minority ethnic groups arrive in Ireland with high level qualifications. A system whereby these can be recognised and equated with Irish qualifications is needed both to allow people work in their area of expertise and experience and to allow the Irish economy to benefit from their full participation.
- Definitive and deliberate anti-racist strategies need to be put in place in both the main education system and in education and training programmes for adults.
- Early school leaving among minority ethnic groups is emerging as an issue and needs to be addressed if greater problems are not to emerge as these young people become adults.

3. Action Programme for the Unemployed

3.1 Introduction

The Action Programme for the Unemployed (APU), contained under the Employability pillar of the Irish National Employment Action Plan (NEAP), aims to minimise unemployment, prevent the drift into long-term unemployment and to assist unemployed people to return to employment through active engagement.

The APU, delivered by FÁS and the Local Employment Service (LES) involves a two stage process. Firstly there is initial engagement with unemployed persons through interviews and the provision of guidance, counselling and placement services and secondly, ongoing training or employment supports are offered to those participating to help them maintain their position or progress to further options. Currently, all individuals under 25 are referred to FÁS when they cross the six months unemployment threshold, while those in the 25-54 year age group are referred at the nine months threshold.

The process of engagement under the APU is, on average, a four week timescale. At the end of this period the person should have a job offer, be in receipt of some form of employability support (such as guidance, counselling, training or education) or be deemed 'not progression ready'. In the latter cases problems such as alcoholism, drug abuse or difficult domestic circumstances are often present. While such issues are not within the remit of FÁS and the approach to these cases is not systematic, often efforts are made to refer these individuals to more appropriate agencies. While different regions vary overall about one third of all placement services work is taken up with APU clients.

The role of the LES is to provide employment services to the most disadvantaged clients in their locality which include the long-term unemployed, lone parents, dependent spouses, ex-offenders, Travellers and other minority ethnic groups and people with disabilities. They make it clear to participants at the outset that participation in the APU process involves feedback to the Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA). While involved in the APU process, this accounts for a much smaller proportion of their clients than in the FÁS employment services.

Trainers and employment services personnel stress the one-to-one nature of their links with unemployed individuals under the APU. A caseload management approach is common across FÁS and the LES and is seen by staff as one of the best ways of working with all disadvantaged groups. FÁS Employment Offices report 20-25 new referrals per week per placement officer under the APU. However, the targets for the NEAP are laid down by the national process and the DSFA refers clients, leaving FÁS with no discretion in these areas.

Expenditure on this measure amounted to 40.5m in 2001. This was less than the estimate in the original Programme Complement i.e the documentation that governs the measure. The reports of the Monitoring Committee for the EHRDOP cite the buoyant economy in 2000 and 2001, the resultant higher levels of employment and lower numbers of unemployed requiring assistance as the reason for this.

3.2 Evidence of Equality Practice

Equality Policy

An overview of the Programme Complement provides an insight into the prospective role of the APU in addressing a wider equal opportunities agenda through basic statements of policy. The Programme Complement does not contain any specific expectations with regard to equality issues except to say that the measure will be open to both men and women and that training provision will be monitored

to ensure that it is meeting needs. However, the Programme Complement envisages a positive impact on poverty through addressing long-term unemployment.

As all the groups examined in this study experience higher than average levels of poverty and unemployment this is an important aspect of the measure. Although not stated in the Programme Complement, the element of proactive contact might be expected to produce a better understanding of specific needs that groups might have and therefore provide an important source of information on how best to meet their needs.

At provider level, FÁS is seen to have an equality policy and FÁS managers referred to the Mission Statement of the organisation, which they felt covered equality issues. Local FÁS offices reported receiving memos on these issues from head office. However, prominent material on equality was not visible in FÁS centres.

Access and Supports

Premises, accessibility, timing of interventions and materials required can impact on the participation rates of disadvantaged clients. APU clients are interviewed in FÁS Employment Services Offices or, in smaller towns, in clinics held in other centres. These offices and clinics are located in most towns and cities, with few available in rural areas. FÁS offices have catchment areas defined by postal districts in Dublin and townlands in rural areas. Most of the centres visited are accessible by public transport, although not always by a direct route.

The situation with regard to physical accessibility varied across FÁS premises and individual internal offices although most are accessible. In the Dublin north region, for example, with one exception, all internal offices in the centre are disability accessible. The LES reported that 3 of their 8 offices have access problems, but limited resources have made it difficult for them to address this in a speedy manner.

For training centres that have members of minority ethnic groups who are non-English speakers attending (most particularly in city and large urban locations) language issues are a major concern. Even in areas where language difficulties have not yet arisen, it is anticipated that this issue will be present in the future. However, both the FÁS centres and the LES visited saw this as an issue for the organisation or agencies to which they referred people and felt assistance in relation to their work under the APU could be arranged where necessary. The FÁS city centre office visited for this study has made a specific effort to recruit staff with appropriate language skills.

In attempting to improve gender equality, a new support system for meeting childcare costs was introduced by FÁS in September 2001. This new scheme provides an allowance based on the age of the child to those on full-time training courses in FÁS. The allowance is paid directly to the relevant childcare provider by FÁS. However, as with language, childcare was viewed by FÁS as an issue for the organisations and agencies to which they referred people, rather than for the employment services themselves. However, the LES visited for this study cited childcare as a major issue for its clients, identifying it as a service without which many clients could not progress. The LES have their own childcare programme for their initiatives, and ensure childcare is dealt with in other programmes where people are being referred on.

The availability of materials in forms that addressed language, disability and cultural issues were not considered to be greatly relevant to employment services staff. Few materials are actually provided to or used by their clients, with one-to-one interviews, guidance and counselling comprising the main aspects of the service. The LES, however, was preparing a Braille application form.

Outreach Work

Many members of the target groups will have had prior negative experience of training, education and

employment services. In this context, how potential participants are contacted and initially engaged with will have an effect on take up. Outreach work is relevant here, but different organisations had very different ideas as to what comprised outreach. As can be seen from the following, this ranged from mainstream training and employment programmes delivered at local level to very specific work with target groups.

In general terms the LES visited cited its eight offices spread throughout disadvantaged communities, the delivery of services through community organisations and involvement with specific initiatives, for example with ex-offenders and ex-drug abusers, as outreach work. The LES viewed its role in the social partners structure as relevant in outreach for people with disabilities. Work has been done on awareness raising and training in this area and an audit of services for disabled people and the role of the partnership and LES in these is being undertaken.

FÁS offices, on the other hand, saw their work with the LES and involvement with the local partnership companies as outreach. FÁS staff also saw Community Employment projects, employment placement services and local Jobs Clubs as a means of forming linkages with local communities. In the case of local FÁS offices, at the time of the study staff still felt it was early days due to the recent merger of FÁS with the National Rehabilitation Board (NRB) and referrals on to organisations such as the Centres for Independent Living and the Alzheimer's Society of Ireland were still common. Specific Community Employment projects and referrals for literacy assistance were also mentioned.

With regard to Travellers, links with the LES were firmly established, with the chairperson of the LES also being the chair of the local support group for Travellers. FÁS pointed to supporting several local Traveller projects and to the support provided to Traveller organisations to run programmes for Travellers. FÁS also mentioned the local Traveller Training Workshops and specific Community Employment projects as a form of outreach.

In the case of older workers, the LES saw its Return-to-Work provision for women as relevant for the over 50s while FÁS pointed to the fact that all of their advertising referenced their 16-65 year old target group. Again, FÁS Employment services staff also cite Community Employment as a point of contact and linkage with the over 50s

The LES subscribed to METRO newspaper for minority ethnic groups but apart from this felt they do not have many minority ethnic groups in their area and didn't have much information on relevant communities. FÁS cited the setting up of the Asylum Seekers Unit and the recruitment of frontline staff with European language capabilities as part of their outreach work.

Staff Training

The LES was focusing its training more towards drug addiction and health and safety. Due to financial limitations and a small staff complement, releasing staff for training which addressed working with difference, such as the NUI Maynooth Diploma in Adult Guidance and Counselling, was difficult. FÁS have a large number of staff engaging in courses in NUI Maynooth. Staff have also received training on disability due to the integration of the National Rehabilitation Board. Some managers found releasing the number of staff to attend courses difficult to sustain at times due to work pressures.

Mainstreaming

For the FÁS employment services, mainstreaming represented the inclusion of specific target groups within mainstream provision. With the recent merger of FÁS and the training components of the National Rehabilitation Board issues of disability predominated. However, FÁS staff reported having few clients with physical or sensory disabilities under the APU. This is primarily due to the Live Register requirement which means anyone receiving disability support was ineligible for unemployment payments. Many people FÁS encountered were not progression ready. Many of these had problems such as depression, alcoholism, schizophrenia or epilepsy. Undoubtedly, many individuals in this

category come from the target groups with which this study is concerned.

The LES view mainstreaming more as undertaking pilot projects or actions, learning the lessons from them and securing mainstream funding to keep them going if successful. With a belief that ideas should come from people on the ground, the LES saw influencing providers as they key challenge in mainstreaming.

3.3 Levels of Participation and Outcomes

In 2001, a total of 5,432 unemployed people completed programmes under this measure – 61% of these had not achieved a Leaving Certificate, thereby indicating that the service was reaching at least some of its target group. In addition, the FÁS/ESRI Follow-up Survey (2000) indicated that the measure was having some positive effect. For instance, 86% of respondents stated that the measure had resulted in ‘improved confidence’, while ‘usefulness in helping to identify job opportunities’ was scored positively by 82% of respondents (85% for those on training programmes and 80% for those who attended employment programmes).

In this study, the LES participants estimated that referrals to them under the APU was very low at only 2-3%, although members of the client groups were referred from other sources, with word of mouth being the most significant. Referrals to FÁS offices under the APU were exclusively from Department of Social and Family Affairs on the basis of the national criteria. APU clients were to get priority, however, in accessing education and training measures.

Each of the four centres visited was asked to indicate the level of participation for each of the 4 target groups in their APU services. Table 3.1 below indicates that in no case was the participation of any of the target groups high or very high. In addition, only people with disabilities and people aged over 50 were considered to have a medium level of participation. The latter was explained by an observed an increasing number of people in their 40s with redundancies and people returning to work. The low scores attributed here to people with disabilities and minority ethnic groups are most likely due to the Live Register requirement for participation under the measure. However, the low participation rate among Travellers is less easily explained.

Table 3.1 Estimated Participation of Target Groups in the Action Programme for the Unemployed Measure

Groups	Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
People with a Disability	1	1	2	0	0
Travellers	2	2	0	0	0
Minority Ethnic Groups	3	1	0	0	0
People Aged Over 50	0	2	2	0	0

Employment service providers expressed the view that the APU did not recognise or make allowance for the specific needs of certain particularly vulnerable target groups. This may also be having an effect on recruitment and participation. For instance, the structure of the APU was seen as restricting the scope of affirmative actions for Travellers and minority ethnic groups. Despite recognition of the many specific issues of their disadvantage, they do not necessarily receive any additional support. The nomadic aspect of Traveller culture was seen to be frustrating ongoing support in places. Language again emerged as an issue for engaging with minority ethnic groups.

Generally older people were seen as needing less intense support under the APU due to their life skills and experience, with the main exception being the very long-term unemployed. FÁS and the LES have been running a high response to long-term unemployment programme in certain areas where

APU results point to a very poor engagement of this group with employment services. With regard to people with disabilities, the LES was conducting a study on specific approaches to this target groups.

3.4 Summary of Findings

- The registered unemployed are targeted by the APU so, therefore, it is reasonable to expect significant numbers of older workers (aged over 50 years) and Travellers to be among the clients of this measure due to their Live Register Status. Expected numbers of people with disabilities or minority ethnic groups would be lower due to their entitlement to other welfare payments in the case of the former, and their ineligibility to unemployment payments and employment supports in the case of the latter.
- This research reveals that the over 50s are seen to have benefited as considerable numbers have been referred under the APU but members of the Traveller community are significantly under-represented.
- The merger of the National Rehabilitation Board with FÁS has brought a focus on issues of physical access and while most centres are accessible, this could and should be improved. Other accessibility issues, such as language provision and childcare, are not generally considered to be of direct concern in the delivery of the APU, but left instead to the various services to which clients are referred. Access to the APU services is generally addressed on an ad hoc needs-based basis with assistance often provided by outside agencies.
- Outreach work, although widely and somewhat imprecisely defined, is evident. The extent of this is somewhat surprising given that clients are referred to FÁS by DSFA. However, linkages with local organisations for example in the voluntary and community sector may have a key role to play in encouraging individuals to engage with the APU, in gaining credibility with members of the target groups and in maintaining them within the employment or training options eventually chosen by them. While this type of activity is in evidence it is not necessarily co-ordinated and planned. This may lead to a lack of capacity or focus on certain groups.
- Staff training is certainly a priority for FÁS and the LES. The most common course referred to is the NUI Maynooth Diploma in Adult Guidance and Education, which covers issues of equality and diversity. This course is generally undertaken by programme staff such as managers and trainers. It may be useful to extend such training to ancillary staff in organisations to achieve a whole-centre approach to equality. Alternatively, or additionally, specific and more targeted training on equality issues would fill a very obvious gap in this area.
- It is apparent that mainstreaming has different, if related, meanings to the various service providers.

4. Early School Leaver Progression

4.1 Introduction

Early school leavers are defined as people who are out of school, unemployed, under the age of 21 and have below Leaving Certificate standard of education. FÁS and the Department of Education and Science are responsible for measures to meet the needs of early school leavers. FÁS is responsible for providing training, support and assistance to early school leavers to progress to jobs, education or other training options. The Early School Leavers Progression (ESLP) measure is delivered through Community Training Workshops (CTWs). FÁS provides the bulk of the funding for the CTWs but control rests with a local board of management representing local interests. Participants are paid a training allowance and while many CTWs only accept people under 18 or under 21 years, about half are open to older applicants.

Generally CTWs can offer between 40 and 60 places, with an average annual number of 90 participants per workshop. They provide counselling, guidance, training, remedial education and work experience. Progression pathways to regular employment and/or skills training are a key component of their work and tracking, monitoring and advocacy are increasingly undertaken. Some CTWs are part of a broader youth service or are attached to community development organisations or centres.

The workshops provide a range of interventions at various accreditation levels under the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC, previously the National Council for Vocational Awards) system. Level one accreditation applies to basic foundation level courses and level three corresponds to the Leaving Certificate Applied. The CTWs also use the FÁS/FETAC Integrated Assessment System of accreditation and most offer FÁS City and Guilds Certification. More than half of CTWs now offer the Junior Certificate as an option. Subjects offered include English, Maths, History, Geography, Materials Technology and Home Economics, Art, Craft and Design, Civics and Business Studies and just under one third offer Leaving Certificate Applied. Courses in office skills and computing are extremely popular and the European Computer Driving Licence, catering, hairdressing, soccer skills (linked to personal development and the leisure industry) also featured in some CTWs.

Expenditure on this measure amounted to €27.4m in 2001 in line with revised forecasts.

4.2 Evidence of Equality Practice

Equality Policy

The Programme Complement for this measure concentrates on equality between men and women and the disadvantage that young males suffer from having a disproportionately higher rate of early school leaving and the problems young females have in leaving school due to pregnancy. Part-time and flexible provision is one of the envisaged solutions along with childcare support and the advocate programme.

The emphasis in the Programme Complement on “timely intervention with students indicating difficulties” relates to the younger members of the Traveller community and minority ethnic groups and young people with disabilities as they all display a tendency towards early school leaving. Other provisions included in the Programme Complement, such as increased places for foundation level training, bridging training programmes for access to higher skills training, advisory supports to assist progression and more flexible part-time and work-based options should also benefit these groups, as well as older workers.

At national level FÁS stressed that they provide financial support and technical assistance while the CTWs are locally managed with local facilities and focus. While the most identifiable trainees are younger people and early school leavers, CTWs can cater for other groups. As the workshops are generally focused on areas of social and economic disadvantage, many members of the target groups of concern in this study should be found among the participants. With specific regard to equality, although CTWs are seen as being more independent in choosing their participants, FÁS provide training and guidelines on matters of equality, particularly in areas covered by legislation.

Children of asylum seekers are entitled to education but not to training, and this clearly excludes them from this measure. Some CTWs have contact with older refugees and the approach adopted is one where these refugees are welcomed, their culture and situation is discussed and their inclusion viewed as a positive experience for everybody. Staff readily admitted that they are learning how to deal with different ethnic groups and are working with the Department of Education and Science on a multicultural education programme.

There is a perception that members of the Traveller community attend Traveller Training Centres instead of CTWs. Nonetheless, where there are a lot of settled Travellers the participation rates of this target group is higher. Sometimes this encourages other Travellers who are not settled to attend also. FÁS agree that multicultural issues need to be taken into account by workshops in their operation. However, it was stated that it is not always obvious that participants are Travellers and specific attention is not desirable.

FÁS stated that disability has always been dealt with by workshops and all staff must be acquainted with relevant legislation. FÁS believe that the CTWs provide a welcoming environment for people with disabilities but that there could still be difficulties in catering for their needs.

FÁS felt it would be rare to have over 50s in workshops, although some offer Return-to-Work courses. Where courses involving young and older people have taken place, these have been seen as fulfilling for all participants. Overall, however, it is considered that the CTWs are mainly for younger people.

As already noted above, many of the target groups are hampered by poor literacy skills. In the CTWs literacy is being integrated into all course work, a three year strategic plan has been developed and full-time Literacy Development Workers are available – these are funded by FÁS and supported by the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA). Advocacy is another initiative of the CTWs aimed at increasing the inclusion of the most excluded. This involves a tailor-made approach to career planning where advocates work with participants, interact with other elements of training/education/welfare system on their behalf and help with career choices. A total of 23 advocates were in place in 2001. In addition, a number of CTWs have introduced special Return-to-Work programmes for women, especially linked to the provision of local childcare facilities.

Most CTWs did not have formal equality statements but felt that equality was implicit in what they did on a day-to-day basis. Equality material was not always prominently displayed in the workshops.

Access and Supports

CTWs operate in a variety of buildings and locations. Converted school houses or other older buildings are the most common premises used. Catchment areas range from small towns and their rural hinterland to much broader geographic areas in large towns and cities. In addition, CTWs are often associated with a sponsoring organisation which may have a thematic or youth services remit rather than a geographic catchment area. Many are within walking distance of the population they served but, overall, public transport predominated as the main way of getting to and from centres. The lack of orbital routes was mentioned in suburban Dublin locations and FÁS is aware of transport issues for rural participants and is examining the extent to which this affects participation and progression choices.

While FÁS consider the CTWs to be a welcoming place for people with disabilities, not every workshop has disability access. Investment has been made in physical upgrading of centres and disability access is a requirement of this process. For some CTWs providing disability access would involve changing premises and they often felt this presented difficulties, particularly where location played a major role in attracting people to the workshop.

In terms of materials CTWs have quite a varied modular curriculum which uses a variety of methods including verbal, aural and some IT. One workshop had made Zoom Text available and another was investigating the use of Braille. Broadly, however, the attitude adopted here is that special needs, including different language needs, would be met if or when they arose. In some workshops where language needs had arisen CTW staff involved in literacy work also provided English language assistance to trainees.

In relation to childcare many CTWs referred to the FÁS childcare allowance as the principal support. One CTW had childcare facilities on site as part of its overall community development facility. While some workshops hoped to provide some type of facility it was seen as very difficult to physically accommodate this.

Outreach Work

The outreach work of the CTWs is often focused on the local geographic community. A high level of outreach work and linkages with other organisations was particularly evident where workshops are part of a broader youth or community services. Various government departments and agencies, local family centres, youth clubs, children's organisations, local authorities, local unemployment offices, the probation service and other CTWs all featured as organisations with which the CTWs had linkages. In this, the youth emphasis of the CTWs is evident.

With regard to people with disabilities, the most common groups with which linkages existed were religious orders in the area. The National Training and Development Institute (NTDI), REHAB and other training organisations were also mentioned, as were mental health groups. Health boards did feature but more so in their role with vulnerable young people.

Some CTWs said that they had had negative experiences with Travellers and other initiatives, such as Traveller Training Centres and Youthreach, were cited as being more appropriate. Another CTW had developed a relationship with a local Traveller Training Centre and had received referrals with very positive results, while some workshops simply reported no links with Traveller groups.

Unsurprisingly there was little linkage with groups which dealt with the over 50s. One CTW visited frequently deals with a local unemployment centre through which contact with this group is maintained, while two more opened their centres at night to adult learners as a separate initiative of the managing organisation.

CTWs had some linkage with groups providing support for refugees and asylum seekers with the explicit approach that only those with refugee status could be accepted. Linkages were greater where there were greater numbers of minority ethnic groups, such as in city locations. One CTW visited has hosted anti-racist events as part of a 6 member consortium which aims to minimise overlap and maximise co-operation.

Staff Training

CTW staff are encouraged to avail of continuing education paid for by FÁS, although some workshop managers felt it took up too much staff time. Health programmes, health and safety, dealing with people with disabilities, suicide prevention, Travellers' culture, in-service courses curriculum development, information technology, alcohol and adult learning were all mentioned as areas in which CTW staff had received or are receiving training and the NTDI and NALA were mentioned as sources of training. However, there was little evidence of training specific to the area of equality.

Mainstreaming

Some workshops said they were not aware of or did not understand the concept of mainstreaming. The emphasis was placed on learning from other initiatives, with equality of access and getting different groups into the workshops also mentioned in discussions on mainstreaming. Some said workshops may not always be the best place for some groups and they need to refer people on to other agencies or services.

4.3 Levels of Participation and Outcomes

A FÁS survey of CTW managers has shown that almost three-quarters (72%) of the women and over half (56%) of the men who completed CTW programmes in 1999/2000 proceeded to employment, education or training. Overall, the proportion of completers progressing to employment has increased from 23% in 1992 to 43% in 2001. The percentage of completers progressing to further education, training or job scheme in both years was 17%, despite a significant decrease in this figure during the mid to late 1990s.

Trainees often presented with a range of problems that impacted on their labour market situation. Many trainees require additional family support and literacy, numeracy and substance abuse problems were also common. Programme participation was viewed to have improved self-confidence, to have increased literacy levels and improved social skills. The barriers to progression from the CTWs identified by managers included, in order of importance:

- training allowances on offer are too low
- poor literacy skills among participants
- parenting responsibilities
- economic (better income) attraction of the jobs market
- too great a gap between entry level skills and skills need to progress

Male participants were more likely than their female counterparts to leave CTW programmes before completion and without certification. Employment opportunities, inability to commit to the programme and health/personal issues made up the top three reasons why people left the course early.

Staff in this study are quite definite that their target is the most disadvantaged people. However, they were not sure if what they delivered was always the most suitable intervention for the target groups in this study. Nonetheless, they expressed themselves willing to work with any group that presented themselves and cited examples of developing new insights from working with new clients. All CTWs referred to high levels of social economic disadvantage in the surrounding communities when discussing recruitment.

CTWs have an open enrolment process. FÁS referrals and school drop-out lists were originally the main sources of referrals for the workshops but this has changed down the years. Now a number of CTWs receive a large number of people through word of mouth referrals. Where the workshop is part of a youth service or community development initiative many referrals were received through these. Health boards, agencies working with vulnerable children, the Juvenile Liaison Officer, the visiting teacher for Travellers, Traveller Training Workshops and doctors were also sources of referrals. Workshops generally did not advertise and had to take care not to be seen as deliberately attracting young people out of schools. All workshops accepted 'walk-in' clients and some gave priority to those without qualifications.

There are no specific social welfare criteria for CTW participants but participants must be registered with FÁS. Most CTWs interview applicants before accepting them and some involved counsellors in

this process. CTWs assess literacy on acceptance but do not use this as a selection criterion, although basic competencies are considered important. Broadly they are more concerned with whether or not the workshop is the most appropriate intervention for the individual and if the applicant will be able to cope with the particular courses on offer. The need for participants to adhere to basic rules in areas such as personal responsibility, good behaviour, discipline and health and safety is also important.

Table 4.1 below presents the CTW's estimates of the participation of the target groups of concern in this study. As expected, the participation of people aged over 50 years and minority ethnic groups is very low. Only one workshop reported a high level of participation of Travellers, with all of the others saying that participation of this group was very low. Two workshops reported medium levels of participation of people with a disability. Overall these results are not surprising as various factors – the existence of Traveller Training Workshops, the lack of entitlement to training among many from minority ethnic groups and the focus of the CTWs on young people – ensure low participation.

Despite these estimates CTWs once again stressed that they deal with a large number of people who are socially and economically disadvantaged.

Table 4.1 Estimated Participation of the Target Groups in the Early School Leavers Progression Measure

Groups	Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
People with a Disability	1	2	2		
Travellers	4			1	
Minority Ethnic Groups	4	1			
People Aged Over 50	3	2			

CTW staff made a number of more general observations on the participation of the target groups. Overall, while customised training from FÁS was mentioned as a way of getting very specific work done with a client that needed it, some CTWs felt the provision of such training was too much of a specialist task for them. With regard to Travellers, one or two centres felt that Travellers had to 'fit in' if they were going to access the centre. Literacy was seen as the major additional intensive support that would be needed for Travellers and group work was emphasised as a good way of working with members of this target group. CTWs generally believed that older people needed additional supports given the workshop's focus on younger people, while assistance with language was the main support provided for minority ethnic groups. Many CTWs cited the adjustment of their premises to cater for people with disabilities as a specific action.

It is noteworthy that one CTW remarked that there was no pressure being placed on them to address equality issues or meet the needs of the specific target groups, even though they would be willing to do more in these areas.

4.4 Summary of the Findings

- CTWs present a very varied picture due to their local management structure. Despite being primarily aimed at disadvantaged young people there is provision for older people to attend and the certification system is designed to facilitate flexibility. Lack of demand was cited by a number of centres to explain the relative absence of the groups of interest here. However, given the emphasis on social, economic and educational disadvantage and the type of provision that is available in workshops the measure is one that has the potential to engage with the target groups of interest here.
- Equality statements and materials were being developed in a somewhat limited way, mainly through addressing the issue of employment equality under the Employment Equality Act. Many

CTWs were moving to consider equality policies and statements and some central guidance would be of benefit to them.

- Outreach provision was generally focused very much on the local community and some CTWs had broad and proactive outreach measures. The recently initiated Advocate Programme has the potential to engage in outreach type work. Outreach with the target groups and general awareness of their needs varied. In workshops which are part of a broader service, co-operation with organisations relevant to the target groups was evident. However, some workshops had little knowledge of the issues involved for the various target groups and believed that the CTWs were not the most suitable option for them.
- The very open method of recruitment amongst most CTWs allows for the pursuit and promotions of greater equality and representation of the target groups. This is particularly the case given that educational qualifications and other entry criteria are not generally applied. However, it is clear that most of the CTWs do not have specific provision for the target groups of concern here. Reported participation was low in most cases and many felt that there was little or no demand from these groups. Therefore despite the CTWs emphasis on serving the most disadvantaged, this is primarily a service for what could be considered typical early school leavers, that is, young people and those from disadvantaged communities without reference to race, ethnicity or disability. It should be noted that this is not always the choice of the CTW itself, but due to national criteria for participation in training, the availability of accessible premises, or the demand for specific and segregated provision among specific target groups.
- Broader availability of language training and childcare as well as dedicated transport would certainly improve the potential of workshops to deal with equality issues more comprehensively. Once more, a common understanding of the concept of mainstreaming would be useful.

5. Sectoral Entry Training: Tourism

5.1 Introduction

Failte Ireland (incorporating the former agency CERT) has responsibility for tourism training in Ireland. It has delivered European Structural Funds (ESF) co-financed training in permanent dedicated training centres and temporary training centres since the 1970s. The training targets adults in the 18-65 age group, including school leavers, the unemployed and particularly the long-term unemployed. Sectoral entry courses run for between 13 and 16 weeks and cover accommodation, cookery, bar, restaurant and catering assistance. The only condition for participation is that people are unemployed and have sufficient levels of literacy and numeracy to deal with health and safety issues. Courses allow students to sample different areas of work and achieve a broad qualification and experience. Certificate qualification can be gained by means of assessment without an exam.

At the time of this study, tourism training in Ireland was the responsibility of CERT. Its functions and those of Bord Failte have since been brought together under a new body, Failte Ireland. In this section we maintain use of CERT as this was the context of the study.

The study found that 450 trainee places were provided nationally and placement rates for trainees were reported to be very high. Courses are delivered on a regional basis and widespread dispersal throughout the country promotes a balanced contribution towards both urban and rural economies and CERT believes its programmes have a positive impact in terms of rural proofing. Programmes are delivered in the Institutes of Technology in Athlone, Cork, Dublin, Dundalk, Galway, Limerick, Sligo, Tallaght, Tralee and Sligo. They are also delivered in the Killybegs Tourism College and Shannon Hotel School. Permanent training centres are often in industrial estates near areas of high unemployment. Some of these centres are quite new and were deliberately situated in this type of location. The centres generally serve large catchment areas. Hotels rented out for training purposes in the off peak period are generally in more remote and rural areas.

CERT research in 2001 examined the issues likely to underpin the development of the tourism industry over the remainder of the decade and found significant scope for improvement in a number of areas. In response, CERT increased access to training with flexible, part-time options for a range of programmes. Programme design is reported to be vertical with progression routes built-in. For example, a trainee can commence training on a Return-to-Work Programme (100 hours), move to an Elementary Skills Programme (624 hours) and then to a formal craft course leading to national certification delivered on a day/block-release or full-time basis.

5.2 Evidence of Equality Practice

Equality Policy

The Programme Complement shows that this is the only one of the three measures in which non-nationals are included as a specific target groups. The Complement further stresses the elementary nature of training and socially excluded and long-term unemployed people receive particular mention. This suggests that the target groups of this study would be represented in the population of trainees. Outreach facilities are also referred to in the Programme Complement and equality between men and women features in terms of encouraging flexible employment patterns.

The Programme Complement envisages that “A key feature will be an increasing emphasis on making training more accessible and more flexible to the target groups. There is a high level of co-operation with local partnership groups in urban areas and community groups in rural areas in the planning, recruitment and implementation of these programmes”. These statements are important as the need

for flexible provision is one of the key issues coming arising from earlier examination of the needs of the target groups and community groups and partnerships could play a key role in promoting an equality focus.

As in the CTWs, CERT trainees are treated as employees and can bring forward any issues of concern under the Employment Equality Act. CERT emphasised that they do not distinguish or separate between the different target groups in this study and that their concern is with the broader concept of disadvantage. They have a policy of reserving 10% of places for people from disadvantaged backgrounds in general but have not always been able to fill these places with appropriate trainees.

While CERT do not systematically record data on the target groups in question, some observations on their participation were made. Older people are thought to be the most common in Sectoral Entry Training, with their number increasing over the last few years. Traveller women have also been present on courses, although Traveller men have been very rare. CERT believes that this is due to cultural beliefs amongst Travellers that much of the work in the tourism sector such as cooking and waiting tables is 'women's work'. CERT recruits trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds and there is a Muslim dish on the menu most days in their main training centre.

With regard to people with disabilities, CERT is open to their inclusion but the choice of location can be restrictive. In addition, for safety reasons the type of disability in question will make a difference to their acceptance on particular courses. For example, there is a rule that those with epilepsy cannot work in kitchens as it is seen to be too dangerous for themselves and others.

CERT have added an equality statement to their application form and some courses contain a module on the employment of people with disabilities. CERT reported having an equality statement which applied to all centres, although frontline staff felt that this was not always applied. CERT also reported having large type signs in their centres. Often such signs were present but were not specifically or necessarily to aid visually impaired people.

Access and Supports

Training centres are generally in major urban centres while temporary centres are in rural locations. Given the relatively large geographical areas covered by CERT centres it was usually necessary for trainees to travel, mainly by public transport. Permanent training centres are fully accessible, but health and safety requirements mean that there is a restricted choice of premises for temporary training centres. CERT has equipped the main training centres with 'Deaf Alert' which assists deaf people in emergency situations. They also have a sign language interpreter.

CERT reported providing language assistance where it was required or else referring trainees to other agencies. CERT reported no childcare facilities - subsidies and some flexibility were reported as the ways in which childcare needs were dealt with.

Materials such as books, hard hats, hairnets and audio visual material are provided. The extent to which relevant materials are adapted to meet the needs or reflect the culture of particular target groups is thought to be limited in the absence of any integrated language provision.

Outreach Work

Given the specific attention given to the long-term unemployed and the socially excluded in the Programme Complement an examination of outreach strategies was important. CERT runs recruitment talks and presentations with schools, community centres, and local unemployment networks. Local schools and community groups are also invited in to visit centres.

With regard to people with disabilities links were often made through running a specific course or intervention with organisations such as the National Association of the Deaf. Linkages with the Cope

Foundation and the Brothers of Charity were specifically mentioned. CERT centres often had Traveller women as participants but few linkages with Traveller groups and Traveller Training Centres were mentioned as being more suitable for this group. Few specific links with the over 50s existed but Return-to-Work courses and the mailing lists for these were used to reach this target group. While there were few links to groups working with minority ethnic groups, some specific programmes were being run with overseas trainees, for example with Polish trainees, at the time of the research.

Staff Training

Once again there was little evidence of specialised equality training for staff. One training centre reported that staff were issued with a pack on equal opportunities and racial equality on joining. The NUI Maynooth Diploma in Adult Guidance and Counselling was the dominant form of training reported by frontline staff and disability awareness also featured. While some of this training is available to non-core staff it is not universal.

Mainstreaming

In CERT mainstreaming was considered to relate solely to disability or providing equal opportunities for everyone. Responses mentioned in relation to questions on mainstreaming included providing access for people with disabilities to all courses, allowing access by all people to all courses without discrimination and taking positive action to ensure minority groups or one or other of the sexes are fast-tracked above others. Adjustment of provision and accepting people who are different were also mentioned in relation to mainstreaming.

5.3 Levels of Participation and Outcomes

CERT recruits through open days and by interview. Enrolments take place 3-4 times each year and before every course. CERT listed FÁS, partnership companies, the DSFA, community groups, the LES and unemployment agencies or centres as their main source of referrals, as well as word of mouth. Access Officers in the various Institutes of Technology are also involved in referrals.

CERT recognises EU qualifications more than any other agency of interest here. They insisted on refugee status where appropriate and that applicants are legally entitled to train and work. Certain disabilities were mentioned as more appropriate to certain types of training. For example, administrative courses, such as receptionist, are considered more appropriate for those with physical disabilities. Epilepsy was singled out for attention due to health and safety requirements.

Centres were again asked to estimate the degree of participation of the target groups for this study. These are shown in Table 5.1 below. The reported numbers were better than in other measures for older people but are quite low for the other target groups. These reported participation rates indicate that barriers persist to the participation of Travellers, and people with disabilities in particular and that there is a better uptake of programmes among the population aged 50 and over.

Table 5.1 Estimated Participation of Target Groups in Sectoral Entry Training: Tourism Measure

Groups	Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
People with a Disability	3	1	0	0	0
Travellers	2	2	0	0	0
Minority Ethnic Groups	1	3	0	0	0
People Aged Over 50	0	0	3	1	0

The participation of people with disabilities was seen to require specific provision as it was considered that their pace of learning would be different. CERT saw literacy as a major barrier to participation by

Travellers that required intensive provision and one centre reported that it was best to deal with Travellers as a group rather than integrate them with others. CERT did not see any great need for more intensive support for older people citing them as the easiest group to work with and their Return-to-Work courses were cited as assisting here. As with the other measures the need to have intensive language support for minority ethnic groups was recognised.

Affirmative action was seen to facilitate the participation of the target groups. Adjustments in buildings for people with disabilities featured as specific affirmative action for that group and places were reserved for trainees with special needs. CERT did not have specific affirmative actions for Travellers but stressed that all courses were open to them. There are no specific affirmative actions for minority ethnic groups outside of exchange arrangements with European countries, limited language support and a CD for overseas workers.

5.4 Issues Arising

- Sectoral Entry Training for Tourism provides for relatively short periods of training. The Programme Complement specifically mentions non-Irish nationals, the socially excluded and the long-term unemployed along with outreach work. CERT reports that their courses are open to all, but that they do not categorise people and do not have a policy of data collection that would identify particular target groups. Despite this, CERT claim that 10% of places are reserved for those from disadvantaged backgrounds and that this quota is not always achieved. Apart from older people the presence of the groups in the training centres included in the study was quite low.
- Outreach strategies do not delve as deeply into communities as other measures appear to. There have been positive examples of specific courses run in conjunction with specific groups, particularly the deaf community. Travellers are also present on programmes, although these are mainly female. The greater inclusion of male Travellers is an ongoing concern and CERT say that they would be happy see more trainees from this group.
- Recruitment is on an ongoing basis which provides some flexibility for potential trainees. However, some of the other main supports that may be required by the target groups are generally provided on an out-of-house basis. In particular, trainees with literacy and / or language difficulties are referred to other organisations and childcare is covered by the payment of an allowance.
- While CERT has an equal opportunities policy for employees this is not the same as an equality statement. Staff training in equality related areas and better local implementation of national equal opportunities policies need to be addressed if the equality agenda is to be pursued. Again, the need for a clearer understanding of mainstreaming is evident.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

Key themes are generally observable across the three measures and arise from a consideration of the needs of the target groups and the measures as they are currently implemented. They are as follows:

Mainstreaming

There is evidence that the concept of mainstreaming is misunderstood and misinterpreted in the measures at both national and local level. In particular, the relationship between mainstream provision and targeted provision appears to be unclear, especially among those implementing the measures at local level. This situation needs to be addressed if much of the potential of the measures is not to be lost. The recognition of people with disabilities within mainstreaming is to be welcomed, but this needs to be broadened to include additional target groups. There is still much confusion around the implications of mainstreaming and the need for current provision to change is not fully appreciated.

An agreed definition of mainstreaming for organisations delivering services with potential to enhance equality would be valuable in this area as there is a tendency to see some aspects of provision and specific target groups in a compartmentalised way.

Recruitment and Participation of the Target Groups

At national level there was an emphasis on the measures being open to all however, work is needed to ensure that the capacity of measures to deal with such groups from an equality perspective is realised at local level. Social and economic considerations are evident in targeting and recruitment and providers feel that the measures clearly focus on the unemployed and most disadvantaged.

Nonetheless, although all providers describe their provision as flexible, measures are restricted in targeting groups by eligibility criteria and a range of considerations including health and safety regulations. There is little evidence of specific attempts to engage the particular target groups of concern in this study and the very low participation of the target groups raises issues in relation to the development of more deliberate targeting measures.

There were a variety of causes cited for these low participation rates:

- (i) Geographical location was seen as central in determining in the ethnic profile of trainees.
- (ii) The common referral practice of word of mouth was seen as re-enforcing trends.
- (iii) A lack of information about the number and location of groups, such as Travellers and minority ethnic groups.
- (iv) The view held in some centres that other dedicated provision was the optimum response to the needs of the target groups.
- (v) A lack of demand from the target groups.
- (vi) Inadequate language provision emerged as one of the recurring barriers to participation by the target groups for whom English is not their first language. The presence and level of language skills amongst staff varied greatly and assistance with the English language was generally equated with literacy difficulties. Despite the fact that an average level of English was felt to be required to avail of the interventions, language supports do not feature greatly in their

provision. Generally lack of demand was cited as the reason for this. Given the growing number of non-English speaking migrants in Ireland equipping staff with some language skills will undoubtedly become more important in the future.

(vii) A lack of flexibility in the timing of provision, with most courses and services being delivered on a nine-to-five basis.

(viii) Inadequate childcare provision and transport difficulties.

The view that all clients or potential clients were treated equally and thus no specific or special treatment was given, however well meaning, is an inadequate response to the obvious challenge of increasing participation from among these groups. It is no coincidence that where specific initiatives or targeted recruitment measures were undertaken the numbers in the measures from among the target groups increased.

Formal Equality Policies and Statements

There is an evident need for greater clarity in relation to equality statements across the measures as these are tools used to further an equality approach in the everyday operation of services. Such policy statements should ideally be linked with very prominent materials on equality issues.

Local providers clearly look to their respective parent organisations or funders for a lead on the development of equality policies and statements. However, at the time of the study, neither FÁS nor CERT had dedicated equality policies and statements that can be transferred to the local level. One or two local centres had developed such policies without great difficulty and the positive impact of these on their provision was notable. The capacity for developing equality statements and guidelines may reside at the centre, but follow-up work locally would enhance the capacity of measures to have well understood and fully implemented equality policies.

Access and Supports

Physical accessibility to centres remains an issue despite progress on this and funding for the adaptation of premises remains an issue. It is notable that reservations were expressed in relation to the suitability of certain training for people with disabilities.

The location and operation of centres owes as much to the history of the providing organisation as opposed to any definite decisions or plans. In the case of new training centres there is evidence that attempts are made to locate these in accessible locations and close to areas of social and economic disadvantage. Travel to and from centres is obviously still necessary and can be of significant distances. Transport remains the responsibility of the trainees or clients and this could have implications for the groups in the study, particularly people with disabilities. Public transport is the main way people will get to the centres in question making accessibility to such transport coterminous with access to the measures. Therefore although the reach of centres is generally quite good some form of transportation assistance or allowance is desirable. It is somewhat surprising that issues of physical access should still feature so prominently and this should be a priority area for the agencies involved.

Specific materials for those with disabilities were not common. Prominently displayed material at receptions and entrances were not present in most centres, although such displays were most common where work on equality policies and statements had already been undertaken. Some organisations were providing materials in Braille thereby illustrating the practicality of such measures. The importance of flexible sources of funding for such activities emerges from the responses. Customised training funds made available by FÁS were used for these and other activities in places with progressive results.

While specific resources for people with disabilities were uncommon, materials in different languages and that reflect cultural differences are even rarer. While some of this can be attributed to the relative newness of the issue of non-national minority ethnic groups in Ireland, the lack of recognition of Traveller culture is not as easily explained. The commonly expressed view that members of the Traveller community are best catered for with Traveller Training Centres is indicative of the distance that many organisations will have to travel if mainstreaming and equality agendas are to be furthered for this target group.

Outreach

Outreach work featured in all three measures but is not as well defined or well co-ordinated as one might hope. Community Training Workshops concentrate on their reaching out to their local communities and links with specific organisations dealing with the target groups tend to be coincidental, for the purposes of providing training for the CTW or non-existent. The situation with CERT was similar. Under the Action Programme for the Unemployed outreach is strictly unnecessary due to the system of referral by the Department of Social and Family Affairs. Nonetheless FÁS and the Local Employment Service reported a good deal of outreach work that largely comprised of contact with specific organisations concerned not only with the needs of the target groups but with more generalised social and economic disadvantage. Overall, a clear and more co-ordinated approach to outreach would benefit the target groups in this study. While local initiatives were in evidence with Travellers, people with disabilities, older people and minority ethnic groups they did not appear to follow from a concerted national policy.

For people with disabilities well established organisations, primarily religious orders and the NTDI, were the main ones with which links had been established. There was a lot less linkage reported with locally-based self-help type groups which may have contact with many people hoping to access education and training. With Travellers there was an assumption that their own dedicated provision, particularly Senior Traveller Training Workshops, was the most appropriate provision. Difficulty with staying in contact with Travellers due to nomadism was reported. While Pavee Point Travellers' Centre was mentioned in the Dublin context there was very little linkage with local advocacy and representative groups which might have assisted in this process.

Outreach work with minority ethnic groups and older people was particularly limited and links were not very well developed with organisations which could assist and promote contact with these groups. This, in some part, reflects that fact that representative organisations for minority ethnic groups are not yet well developed at local level and groups working with older people tend to be focused on active retirement as opposed to education and training for labour market participation.

Overall staff in the different organisations had a limited role in outreach work. Trainers and frontline staff generally only interact with specific organisations and groups when relevant issues arise, such as referring a client or getting specific advice on dealing with particular individuals. However, given that examples of good practice in outreach were observed it is clearly something that can be done well under the measures. Sharing best practice might assist in developing this area of work.

Course Content and Certification

The course content and description of services shows that the three measures in question are or should be accessible in terms of curriculum despite a high degree of educational disadvantage among the target groups. The NCVA/FETAC system along with the FÁS IAS offer a level of provision which is accessible to those with low original attainment levels and offers progression and higher levels of certification where appropriate. Similarly Leaving Certificate Applied and Junior Certificate provision in the CTWs will assist specific categories. CERT courses are similarly accessible in terms of content and have the added advantage of being short with very definite outcomes.

As noted above, English language assistance could not be said to exist in any real sense in the measures in question. There is evidence of some local effort but generally it was felt that the need did not arise. The integration of language assistance into courses would be of benefit and one approach to this would be the provision of a staff resource that could be made available on a shared basis where needed. Written work features heavily in the main training courses and considerable effort is put into addressing the literacy and numeracy difficulties of clients. Dedicated assistance is often provided in the training centres or clients are referred to external organisations.

Equality Training for Staff

Staff training features across the measures. The NUI Maynooth Diploma in Adult Guidance and Counselling was the most commonly mentioned and this includes specific modules on working with difference. Disability awareness is also common and primarily achieved through talks provided by relevant organisations. These talks were normally for all staff and frontline staff were quite content with the level and type of training they had received. There is a gap however in workplace training that deals specifically with the issue of equality.

6.2 Recommendations for Policy-Makers

Recommendations are presented here in relation to general policy covering the measures.

Dedicated equality statements and strategies should be developed at national and local level.

Progress towards a more coherent equality agenda in the measures concerned must be led from the top. While organisations have gone some way towards this with both employment equality statements and mission statements which refer to equality there is a need for explicit statements outlining commitments and the role of different parts of the organisation. Such documents would then become key management tools in adjusting provision. Local sites should be required to produce such statements, based on the position of their national authority. These need not necessarily be lengthy documents but should involve staff and be accepted as guiding the work of the centre. The issue of mainstreaming should be covered.

Proactive outreach and affirmative actions should be initiated or strengthened.

While providers were aware of the importance of dealing with the target groups in the study this was not always reflected in their work. Often local centres could be seen as passive recipients of clients rather than as active agents in determining who they dealt with. The need for such outreach strategies and affirmative actions is further re-enforced by the success of the relatively few and sometimes modest efforts observed in this area. Such work should be promoted and supported by national agencies.

A whole-centre / whole-agency approach should be encouraged in promoting equality

While there is an awareness of equality issues amongst those delivering the measures it is important that everyone involved in the process is well informed on equality matters including all staff. Similarly premises, classrooms and offices should indicate a commitment to equality by displaying prominent statements or images which would make diverse groups feel welcome and that they belong from arrival to departure.

Greater flexibility should be provided for in the delivery of the measures.

The level of flexibility apparent in recruitment and intake is to be strongly welcomed. However progress on adjusting the nine-to-five nature of provision would further assist in promoting access amongst the target groups.

Data collection and record keeping should enable analysis of the groups concerned.

The absence of data on the target groups within the measures was notable. This issue is being dealt with more fully in other research by the Equality Studies Unit.

Equality awareness raising and training should be made available in all centres.

While some staff attend courses in Universities these are not usually dedicated to equality studies. In addition, many of these courses are only open to professional staff. Dedicated training open to all staff is needed.

Agreement should be reached at national level on the type and nature of training (if any) which cannot be accessed by people with disabilities.

If restrictions are to apply to people with disabilities it is important that it is done by agreement between agencies and bodies such as the National Disability Authority and representative groups and that this is based on research and evidence.

Allowances should be reviewed to ensure there is an incentive for the groups concerned to participate in the measures and that secondary benefits are secured.

Social welfare rates of allowance will not always ensure that there is a step-up in income when an individual takes up an education or training course. Measures to address this issue have been undertaken by FÁS and these should be examined for their wider application. Prior secondary benefits, in particular the medical card, should be retained by all trainees.

6.3 Recommendations for Service-Deliverers

Target numbers for participation of the various target groups should be set for the Measures.

Without clear expectations as to what is a reasonable level of participation it will be difficult to make progress on the current low numbers. Setting such targets will naturally involve negotiation and should draw on other research been completed the Equality Studies Unit. Targets should cover progression.

Equality issues should inform assessment processes.

Such an action would give express recognition to the status of a participant. It may not necessarily entail specific additional actions but the recognition of status would allow equality issues be reflected in the relative progress made by participants.

Firm and definite targets should be set for physical accessibility to all centres.

Physical access is one of the most basic requirements for people with disabilities and also has relevance for other groups. While progress has been made it is of note that not all centres are accessible or even plan to be. Ancillary issues, such as co-ordination of public transport with training and education measures (perhaps under the auspices of the County Development Boards) should be included under these targets.

Further ancillary services focused on the needs of the target groups, for example language skills, training materials for people with disabilities and, advocate type services should be developed. Customised training funds could be adjusted for this purpose.

Given the diverse needs of the groups it would not necessarily be practical to recommend on each and every type of support that needs to be put in place. Furthermore, elements of these types of supports exist, although they are generally run on a localised basis with once-off or uncertain funding. FÁS customised training was one area utilised a great deal. Similarly the Advocate Programme in Community Training Workshops, while focused on younger people, is a positive example of tailor made support. The aim of this recommendation is to ensure that provision can be adapted or shaped

to meet the needs of the groups concerned in a flexible and cost efficient way. Currently advocates, guidance counsellors, customised training and literacy support are shared and distributed across the measures. The key to assisting the target groups of this study would be to introduce equality criteria into the management of these resources.

Specific links should be forged with representative and support groups in the recruitment processes.

Organisations that work with the target groups may be able to advise on recruitment or on how the measures could be made more attractive to the groups. Examples of good practice here include the work under the Action Programme for the Unemployed (APU) with Traveller organisations. Here, cold calling of Travellers created difficulties whereas the aligning of this process with measures taken by Traveller groups proved more successful.

Linkages with other centres or institutions should focus on the best outcomes for current or potential participants. Agreements should be developed to govern this.

Such a development would ensure that where dedicated provision for the target groups exists it would be used appropriately and the measures in question here could be seen to feed into or from other provision. This would counter an often expressed view that dedicated provision for the target groups was the most appropriate.

Providers should be encouraged to operate as part of local consortia or to undertake joint endeavours.

Examples of best practice in this study generally arose when knowledge and intelligence of equality issues was shared by providers.

Combination of provisions and best practice should be encouraged in the provision of childcare.

While the provision of an allowance for childcare is a very welcome step forward it is important to encourage organisations to provide childcare themselves where possible to prevent a demand driven inflation in childcare rates.

6.4 Recommendations for Measures

Action Programme for the Unemployed

Physical accessibility should be a priority issue.

In line with recommendations made above all centres delivering the APU should be fully accessible to all of the target groups.

A specific equality focus should be included in high support activity.

High support activity as a follow up to APU engagement can be useful in bringing individuals into contact with Employment Services. Staff should be briefed and trained on equality issues. Interaction should demonstrate knowledge of the needs of the target groups.

Liaison with representative groups should be further developed.

Liaison should take place nationally and locally with representative organisations of the target groups. Such liaison would inform the groups of the operation and processes involved in the APU and provide feedback to the Employment Services from target groups about their expectations and experiences.

Equality materials and statements should be prominently displayed.

Many members of the target groups may be anxious or poorly informed about the role of Employment

Services. Prominently displayed material informing people of equality principals may help make centres more welcoming

Early School Leaver Progression

Physical accessibility of all centres should be prioritised.

Physical accessibility is in need of special attention amongst CTWs as there are a high proportion of older buildings in use. Capital sums are available and a date for full accessibility should be set.

Exchange of best practice on outreach work between CTWs should be encouraged.

Good examples of outreach work were encountered in some CTWs while other workshops do little or none of this type of activity. Given that such variation exists within a measure where co-ordinators are linked in national and regional networks, best practice should be relatively easily exchanged and encouraged.

Adoption of equality statements by workshop management committees should be promoted and facilitated.

Workshops and FÁS are keen to emphasise the independent nature of CTWs and their boards of management. Thus it is incumbent on each and every board of management to formulate an equality statement. The role of technical assistance which FÁS provides could co-ordinate this matter but it is important that management feel ownership over such a process.

The feasibility of more evening courses should be investigated.

Given that some CTWs saw this as an important activity already it is worthy of investigation as a way of offering alternatives to nine-to-five type provision that is not always suitable for the target groups.

Sectoral Entry Training: Tourism

The provision of specific group provision should be investigated.

Taking trainees in groups, for example Travellers, was seen to have potential in one CERT centre. This type of provision may be worth investigating for use with other target groups. Naturally, it is important to ensure this was not, or did not become, segregated provision

CERT should adopt and promote a formal equality statement.

CERT does not have a formalised equality statement covering its responsibilities under the Equal Status Act. The adoption and promotion of such a statement would be an important element of furthering an equality driven approach.

Shared language and literacy services should be developed.

CERT was the most dependent agency on outside language and literacy assistance and did not envisage offering any type of integrated support to trainees in these areas. Thus any type of service shared across CERT centres or with other services would be an important step forward here.

Enhanced interaction with local support organisations for the groups concerned should be pursued.

The outreach work CERT carried out tended to be focused on schools and other community type facilities. Greater specific liaison with organisations dealing with the groups in question would undoubtedly be a positive move.

A review the operation of reserved places and general life-skills training should be carried out to see if a greater focus on equality can be achieved.

CERT was the only organisation with a formalised reservation of places for disadvantaged clients. It was, however, unclear how this was applied and monitored. The groups covered by equality legislation would certainly fit this category and benefit from a more formalised approach. Life-skills training is the non-technical area of CERT training currently used for job search preparation etc. and could play a role in addressing issues of language and literacy.

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